



IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS IN TENNESSEE



CRITERIA FOR SITE SELECTION

1. Sites important to Endangered or Threatened species in Tennessee.

Description: Nominated sites need to regularly support significant breeding or non-breeding densities of one or more of the species listed as Endangered (E) or Threatened (T) in Tennessee. This applies primarily to breeding or wintering sites, though regular migratory areas may be considered if known to be of exceptional importance. Species listed as endangered or threatened in Tennessee must currently use the sites. Thresholds will vary, but sites should have a substantial number of individuals or be among the 3-5 sites in the state with the highest regularly occurring populations.

Golden Eagle (T)
Peregrine Falcon (E)
Least Tern (interior) (E)
Northern Saw-whet Owl (T)

Northern Raven (T)
Bewick's Wren (E)
Bachman's Sparrow (E)
Lark Sparrow (T)

2. Sites important to In Need of Management species in Tennessee.

Description: Nominated sites need to regularly support significant breeding or non-breeding densities of one or more of the species listed as In Need of Management (M) in Tennessee. Species listed as In Need of Management in Tennessee must currently use the sites. Thresholds will vary, but sites should have a substantial number of individuals, have a significant complement of in need of management species, or be among the 2-3 sites in the state with the highest regularly occurring populations.

Anhinga (M)
Least Bittern (M)
Great Egret (M)
Little Blue Heron (M)
Snowy Egret (M)
Mississippi Kite (M)
Bald Eagle (M)
Northern Harrier (M)
Sharp-shinned Hawk (M)
King Rail (M)
Common Moorhen (M)

Barn Owl (M)
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (M)
Olive-sided Flycatcher (M)
Black-capped Chickadee (M)
Loggerhead Shrike (M)
Golden-winged Warbler (M)
Cerulean Warbler (M)
Swainson's Warbler (M)
Henslow's Sparrow (M)
Vesper Sparrow (M)

3. Sites that contain rare or unique habitat within Tennessee or are an exceptional representative of a natural habitat, and hold important species or species assemblages largely restricted to a distinctive habitat type.

Description: Nominated sites need to include habitats that are rare or unique in Tennessee OR that are exceptional, large and intact supporting the full complement of bird species dependent on that habitat type. Examples in Tennessee include grasslands for Northern Bobwhite, Eastern Meadowlark, Grasshopper Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow, etc.; marshes for American Bittern, Least Bittern, King Rail, Virginia Rail, Sora, Common Moorhen, etc.; mature deciduous forests for Wood Thrush, Cerulean Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, etc. Consideration will also be given to sites with exceptionally high species and habitat diversity.

4. Sites where a significant number of birds concentrate for breeding, during migration, or in winter.

Description: Nominated sites need to hold a significant number of one or more species breeding, non-breeding, or in migration. Numerical estimates for groups should be based on a short period of time, e.g., one-time counts such as daily surveys, and not on cumulative totals. Introduced, feral, and nuisance species (resident Canada Goose, American Crow, European Starling, Common Grackle, etc.) are not included.

4a. Waterfowl: Nominated sites should regularly support 500+ waterfowl in winter or 1000+ waterfowl in migration. Waterfowl is broadly defined as loons, grebes, cormorants, swans, geese, ducks, coots, and moorhens.

4b. Wading Birds: Nominated sites should regularly support 25+ breeding pairs of wading birds (e.g., bitterns, herons, egrets) or 100+ individuals feeding or in migration.

4c. Raptors: Nominated sites should be migration corridors that regularly support 1000+ migratory raptors per season.

4d. Shorebirds: Nominated sites should regularly support 500+ shorebirds in migration.

4e. Gulls and Terns: Nominated sites should regularly support 1000+ gulls or 100+ terns in winter or in migration. Landfills not included.

4f. Land Birds: Nominated sites should be important migratory stopover or seasonal concentration sites for migrating land birds. Sites may qualify on the basis of exceptionally high numbers of birds during migration (e.g., at least 500 individuals during spring or fall migration or at least one fallout of 500+ individuals per migration), high densities of breeding species, or as "migrant traps" relative to the surrounding areas (e.g., 50+ passerine migrant species per season). Strong consideration will be given to areas with consistently high overall species diversity or diversity within a particular group, e.g., warblers.

4g. Single Species Concentrations: Nominated sites should regularly support significant concentrations of a "congregatory" species but may not meet the thresholds above. Such sites should support a higher proportion of a species statewide population, >1%, than other similar areas.

5. Sites important for long-term research and/or monitoring projects that contribute substantially to ornithology, bird conservation, and/or education.

Description: Nominated sites have a long-term research record, five years or more, that contributes substantially to ornithology and bird conservation.